

Step 1

PLAN

Plan your activities, type of company, and products to offer.

- Carry out market research
- Validate ideas
- Make a description of your business
- Prepare to test your products

Use the links to familiarize yourself with the food industry and regulations.

PLEASE NOTE:

If you reside in Finland with a residence permit, before starting anything, confirm from Finnish Immigration Service (Migri) that you have the right to operate a business.

Links

Finnish Food Authority's instructions for setting up a food business by industry



If planning food import, study Customs' food guidance



Business plan template
Business Espoo calculation template
Templates (EN)



Templates (FIN)



Finnish Immigration Service (Migri)



Available help from business advisors

Talk to a business advisor to review your plans and next steps



Aspects to consider / examples

Business plan
Operational plan
Shareholder agreement

Step 2

PERMITS, DOCUMENTS, LICENSES

Confirm your right to work with food and the suitability of premises. Consult a hygiene inspector.

- Premises notification and food import procedures must be registered separately.
- If you already have a hygiene passport, focus on products and premises.
- Note also that selling alcohol requires a separate permit.

Links

For food import businesses, request seller product certificates if required



Food premises notification require a premises layout and an own-check plan describing hygiene management.
Own check guidance



Hygiene inspector



Hygiene passport



If selling alcohol, read more about the permit process



Available help from business advisors

Check permit and hygiene requirements with a business advisor.

Aspects to consider / examples

- Hygiene passport
- Lease/rental contract
- Seller product certificates
- Food premises notification
- EORI registration for import/export
- For perishable goods imports, please note that designated entry points may apply, check with customs advisory.

Food pathway



Starting a food business always requires several notifications, regardless of company form or business type.

At minimum, you need a hygiene passport (personal qualification) and a food premises notification. Food trucks must be registered, and although not recommended, home kitchens can also be registered (professional hygiene standards apply). Food factories require a license and follow different registration procedures than restaurants. Requirements vary depending on operation type, product, and industry regulations.

Always seek business advice before starting a food business!



Step 3

RESOURCERS, CONTRACTS

Identify what resources are needed and how much investment is required.

Confirm contracts (e.g. rental, suppliers, staff).

- File for notification 4 weeks prior to start of operation.
- Food manufacturing requires a permit-like pre-operation approval, not just a notification.
- Only after notification of approval can you start business operations.

Discuss with a business advisor prior to company registration.

When ready, set up a business ID

Link

File for notification 4 weeks prior to start of operation



Available help from business advisors

Work with a business advisor to plan your resources and agreements.

Ensure you discuss with a business advisor prior to company registration.

Aspects to consider/examples

- What is needed?
- How much?
- Contracts for staffing, suppliers etc.

Step 4

FINAL PREPARATIONS AND LAUNCH

Go through your launch checklist and marketing plan.

- Prepare premises
- Receive approved notification status
 - Stock up
 - Start marketing

Available help from business advisors

Review everything with an advisor before you launch your business.

Aspects to consider/ examples

- Business plan
- Operational plan
- Shareholder agreement

